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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/019,941	05/08/2002	Peter Christoffel Bezuijen	2001-1003	8756

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EXAMINER
WONG, LESLIE

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2164	

DATE MAILED: 06/02/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

PTO-90C (Rev. 10/03)

	Application No.	Applicant(s)
Office Action Summary	10/019,941	BEZUIJEN ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Leslie Wong	2164	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE <u>3</u> MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on <u>08 March 2006</u>.

2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.   2b) ☒ This action is non-final.

3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) ☒ Claim(s) <u>27,29-40 and 42-54</u> is/are pending in the application.

    4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) ☒ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.

7) ☒ Claim(s) <u>28 and 41</u> is/are objected to.

8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on <u>08 May 2002</u> is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.

    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

    Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:

      1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

      2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

      3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.

5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1.   A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set

forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this

application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set

forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action

has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 08

March 2006 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

        35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

> Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

2.   Claims 53-54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is

directed to non-statutory subject matter. The language of the claim raises a question as

to whether the claim is directed to an environment or machine which would result in a

practical application producing a concrete, useful, and tangible result to form the basis

of statutory subject matter under 35 U.S.C 101.

3.   *Claims 53 and 54 recite "Data carrier provided with a **computer program...**" and*

*"**Computer program...**"* appear to be software (i.e., program) per se and therefore not

statutory.

([c]omputer programs claimed as computer listings per se, i.e., the

descriptions or expressions of the programs, are not physical "things." They

are neither computer components nor statutory processes, as they are not

"acts" being performed. Such claimed computer programs do not define any

structural and functional interrelationships between the computer program and

other claimed elements of a computer which permit the computer program's

functionality to be realized. In contrast, a claimed computer-readable medium

encoded with a computer program is a computer element which defines

structural and functional interrelationships between the computer program and

the rest of the computer which permit the computer program's functionality to

be realized, and is thus statutory. See Lowry, 32 F.3d at 1583-84, 32 USPQ2d

at 1035. Accordingly, it is important to distinguish claims that define

descriptive material per se from claims that define statutory inventions." See

Interim Guidelines page 53.

To expedite a complete examination of the instant application the claims rejected

under 35 U.S.C. 101 (nonstatutory) above are further rejected as set forth below in

anticipation of applicant amending these claims to place them within the four categories

of invention.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4.   The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set
> forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and
> the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the
> invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains.
> Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of

the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of

the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein

were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation

under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was

not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to

consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g)

prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

5.   Claims 27, 29-31, 39, 40, 42-44, and 52-54 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

as being unpatentable over Uhl et al. ("Uhl") (U.S. Patent 6,292,709 B1) in view of

Higgins et al. ("Higgins")(US 5,754,671 A).

Regarding claims 27, 40, and 53-54, Uhl teaches installation and method for

updating an address database with recorded address records, comprising:

a).   at least one processor (14, 15, 42) for receiving and processing address

data as shown on items of post (col.1, lines 10-14 and Fig. 6);

b).   a memory (22), connected to the at least one processor (14, 15, 42) for

storing the address data (col. 6, lines 1-7 and Fig. 6);

c).   a database memory 944), connected to the at least one processor (14, 15,

42), containing the address database stored therein (col. 5, lines 59-62; and col. 6, lines

1-6 and Fig. 6) characterized in that

d).   the at least one processor (14, 15, 42) is equipped to compare the

address data with the address records stored in the database memory (44) , to update

statistical data relating to said address records stored in said database memory (44),

and to update the content of the database memory (44) on the basis of the comparison

of the address data with the stored address records (col. 5, lines 50-62, col. 6, lines 41-

44 and 53-55 and abstract; col. 5, lines 14-17; col. 7, lines 15-56).

Uhl does not explicitly teach determining a quality rating for the address data on

the basis of predefined criteria, the quality rating indicating how good the address data

are.

Higgins, however, teaches determining a quality rating for the address data on

the basis of predefined criteria, quality rating indicating how good the address data are

as for each normalized character image, the character recognition process produces 9

choices plus their respective confidence values. Confidence values are distance

measure from the ideal that ranges from 1-255, with 1 being the highest confidence (col.

4, lines 24-28). The candidates are then ranked based on the sum of the character

confidence values for the individual characters of the three-digit zip codes. The three-

digit zip code with the highest confidence value sum is then assumed to be the correct choice for that image (col. 7, lines 41-45; col. 5, lines 44-49).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention was made to combine the teachings of the cited references because Higgins's teaching would have allowed Uhl's to facilitate selection of the correct choice for the image by providing ranking for the candidates based on the sum of the character confidence values for the individual characters of the three-digit zip codes as suggested by Higgins at (col. 7, lines 41-45).

Regarding claims 29-31 and 42-44, Uhl further teaches wherein the at least one processor is equipped to select name lines from the address data to split the names lines into individual elements in accordance with predefined rules and partly to base the quality rating on the selection of name lines and the splitting thereof (col. 4, lines 8-19 and col. 5 lines 50-62).

Regarding claims 39 and 52, Uhl further teaches wherein post sorting unit (26, 28) for automatic sorting of the items of post (1) making use of the address database (col. 9, lines 36-52).

5.   Claims 32-37 and 45-50 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Uhl et al. ("Uhl") (U.S. Patent 6,292,709 B1) in view of Higgins et al.

("Higgins")(US 5,754,671 A) as applied to claims 27, 29-31, 39, 40, 42-44, and 52-54 in

view of Byrd, Jr. et al. ("Byrd") (U.S. Patent 5,832,480).

Regarding claims 32 and 45, Uhl further teaches wherein the at least one

processor is equipped to derive a name for an addressee from the name lines, to derive

an address for the addressee form the address data, to read registered names of

persons residing at the address from the address database and to compare theses with

the name of the addressee (col. 2, lines 34-36).

Uhl and Higgins do not explicitly teach on the basis of that comparison, to determine a

comparison score per registered name, a comparison score having a higher value the

greater the degree of correspondence between the name of the addressee and a

respective registered name.

Byrd, however, teaches the equivalence processor scans the list of name

elements until it finds a name element with a high confidence score for a given entity

type. The entity-type check processes results in a certain confidence score. If the

confidence score is high enough, the entity type is assigned to the name element and

the values of the relevant attributes are set (col. 18, lines 15-18; col. 15, lines 25-35).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention

was made to combine the teachings of the cited references because Byrd's teaching

would have allowed Uhl- Higgins's to facilitate identification of variant of a name by ·

scanning the list of name elements until it finds a name element with a high confidence

score as suggested by Byrd at (col. col. 4, lines 9-11 and 15-18).

Regarding claims 33 and 46, Uhl further teaches wherein the at least one

processor is equipped to determine that the address data are new if the comparison

scores are relatively low and the quality rating is relatively high (col. 5, lines 6-14; col. 6,

lines 53-55; col. 10, lines 60-64).

Regarding claims 34 and 47, Uhl further teaches wherein the at least one

processor is equipped to determine that the address data are known (i.e., correct

address) if the comparison scores are relatively high and the quality rating is relatively

high (col. 9, lines 59-65).

Regarding claims 35, 37, 48, and 50, Uhl further teaches wherein the at least one

processor is equipped to determined that the address data are unknown if the

comparison scores are relatively low and the quality rating is relatively low (col. 2, lines

14-18 and col. 9, lines 6-17).

Regarding claims 36 and 49, Uhl further teaches wherein the at least one

processor is equipped to generate an additional address record, containing the address

data, in the address database if the address data are new (col. 2, lines 20-22).

6.   Claims 38 and 51 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable

over Uhl et al. ("Uhl") (U.S. Patent 6,292,709 B1) in view of Higgins et al. ("Higgins")(US

5,754,671 A) as applied to claims 27, 29-31, 39, 40, 42-44, and 52-54, further in view of

Cianfrocca et al. ("Cianfrocca") (US 6,088,796 A)

Regarding claims 38 and 51, Uhl further teaches wherein data stored in the central

database can be processed only via predefined rules or some of the data stored in the

central database can be accessed via an output routine (col.10, lines 52-59).

Uhl and Higgins do not explicitly teach the address database is stored with security and

can be accessed via a secure output routine.

Cianfrocca, however, teaches the database is stored with security and can be

accessed via a secure output routine as an outside user has no ability to circumvent the

system and gain access to the application server and database management system

from outside the fire wall (col. 7, lines 21-24).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the

invention was made to combine the teachings of the cited references because

Cianfrocca's teaching would have allowed Uhl-Higgins's to provide a higher level of

security than was previously available in connection with efforts to make unauthorized

changes to the systems by dedicating pathway or port through the firewall as suggested

by Cianfrocca at col. 7, lines 30-37.

Allowable Subject Matter

6.   Claims 28 and 41 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base

claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the

limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Prior art of record fails to teach a combination of elements including wherein said

statistical data includes at least one of grouping comprising: frequency with which an

address record occurs per sorting center; dates on which an address record occurred

on an item of post; interval between two successive times that an address record was

used o an item of post; average length of time between two successive times that an

address record was used on an item of post; and sender's address data in relation to

the address records.

Response to Argument

7.   Applicant's arguments filed 08 March 2006 have been fully considered but they

are not persuasive.

Applicant argue that the present invention incorporated Higgins' idea of gathering

real-time statistics on a mail stream, the gathered data can be exploited to achieve

higher recognition relates of address block and that the new claims emphasized on the

mentioned difference: "updating statistical data".

In response to the preceding arguments, Examiner respectfully submits that

Higgins teaches the "databases with addresses and updating statistical data" as real

time data for the parameters of interest, such as address block location, zip code ... is

collected from the mail processing equipment in order to generate a dynamic data base

having statistical information (col. 5,lines 14-18). Higgins further teaches since it may

be beneficial to gather and process these statistics on a continuous basis and/or during

real-time operations, the ability to exploit the statistical characteristics during operations

is highly likely (col. 7, lines 9-11; 15-30) and as indicated from Applicant's response

pages 14-15 that Higgins does teach the above mention limitations. Based on the

above reasons, it is submitted that the combination of Uhl-Higgins would have arrived at.

the claimed invention.

Further, Applicant argues that the present invention does not related to a method

and/or device to improve the recognition of postal addresses as the cited prior art do,

instead, it relates to an installation and a method for updating an address database with

records... the statistical data.

In response to the preceding arguments, Examiner respectfully submits that

Higgins teaches updating an address database with records... the statistical data as

indicated from the above paragraph. Further, it is submitted that the cited prior art

processes mail using computer programs in the same manner as the claimed invention.

Wikipedia defines the term Installation as follows:

> installation (computer programs)
>
> **Installation** (or **setup**) of a <u>program</u> is the act and the
> effect of putting that program in a computer system so that it
> can be executed.

Based on the above definition, the teachings of the applied prior art

reads on to the claimed limitations.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Leslie Wong whose telephone number is (571) 272-4120. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday 9:30am - 6:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, CHARLES RONES can be reached on (571) 272-4085. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Leslie Wong
Primary Patent Examiner
Art Unit 2164

LW
May 30, 2006